

Hello, my name is Thomas Gilbertie, and I'm a constituent in Middlebury. I am testifying today as a student, but most of all, as a person with a soul. I am testifying today for Senate Bill 4 WITH the rent cap. Senators and Representatives, the reality is that the rent cap proposed is a compromise of a compromise of a compromise. The initially introduced Senate Bill 138 included a 2.5% rent cap, the illegalization of no-cause evictions, and regulates rent between tenants. HB 6588, testified upon last week, had a 4% cap plus inflation, doesn't regulate rent between tenants, and does not end no-cause evictions. And all of a sudden this morning, there was word that a rent cap would be taken out of the bill and that we, the people, would not be allowed to testify about rent caps because of that. I don't even know if that's allowed under CGA rules. Luckily now it's back on. Mr/Mrs. Chair, the housing committee is playing with the lives of people in this state. I am testifying today not only because I have a soul but because, in around a year or so, I will be out of college, and like a lot of college students, I will be looking into getting my own apartment on rent next year. On average, the rent in my area is \$1200 per month for a one-bedroom apartment. And this, for me, is terrible, especially considering that the average starting salary for someone in Marketing, which is the field I intend to go into, is around \$37,000 per year. And this is terrible for me because that would mean rent would take up close to 40% of my income, which would mean that I'm well beyond the 30% threshold to be considered 'rent burdened.' And unfortunately, I'm not the only one. Mr/Mrs. Chair, no person in one of the wealthiest states in the nation and the most prosperous nation in the world should not have to be going through the problems that real people in this state are going through. We must address this crisis and secure a better future for everyone, regardless of wealth or socioeconomic status.